



Tuberculosis in Blacks

WHAT IS THE HEALTH ISSUE?

- Black, non-Hispanic persons continue to have a disproportionate share of tuberculosis (TB) in the United States.
- While rates of TB in both blacks and whites have declined substantially over the past decade, the disparity has not decreased.
- The rate of TB in black, non-Hispanic persons is 11.6 cases per 100,000 population, which is more than eight times higher than the rate of TB in white, non-Hispanic persons (1.4 cases per 100,000 population).
- In 2003, TB disease was diagnosed in 4,145 black, non-Hispanic persons—28 percent of all TB cases nationally.
- In 2003, black, non-Hispanic persons represented 45 percent of TB cases in U.S.-born persons and more than one fourth of all cases.

WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

In 2003, CDC awarded a supplemental grant to three project sites (the Chicago Department of Health, the Georgia Department of Human Resources, and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control) to intensify TB prevention, control, and elimination activities in black communities in the United States. These 3-year projects (currently in the third year of funding) are examining the social and cultural dimensions of health-seeking behaviors, beliefs, and values to develop targeted interventions. An ongoing, participatory evaluation is being conducted, based on the CDC Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health.

In May 2003, CDC and the Advisory Council for the Elimination of Tuberculosis (ACET) cosponsored a consultation with national, nongovernmental organizations and agencies whose programs could have an impact on TB control efforts in the black population. The consultation was intended to raise awareness about this health disparity, solicit support for eliminating TB in the black population, and develop recommendations for accelerating the decline in TB rates among black persons. As a result of this 2-day meeting, ACET developed a five-point strategy for increasing awareness about the TB disparity. Meeting participants also called for increased research in this population.

Example of a Program in Action:

CDC funded a formative research and intervention program entitled, “Addressing Tuberculosis among African Americans in the Southeast.” Program objectives are to determine barriers to health-seeking behavior and treatment adherence for black, non-Hispanic persons with, or at risk for, TB; to determine barriers to TB guideline adherence among providers who serve this population; to develop and test interventions to overcome identified barriers; and to improve partnerships and collaborations among the TB programs and the providers and organizations serving this population.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

CDC will translate findings from the three project sites and the formative research and intervention program into interventions for implementation in other areas in the country with disproportionate rates of TB in black, non-Hispanic persons. Data collection on the formative research study is scheduled to begin in spring 2005.

CDC also publishes a quarterly newsletter highlighting TB issues and projects in the black community which is distributed nationally to public health and community partners who serve blacks and their communities. The newsletter, TB Challenge, is also available on the Internet: http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/tb/TB_Challenge/toc.htm